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SUBJECT: SECURITY COUNCIL CONDEMNS TERRORIST ATTACKS IN IRAQ

¶1. (U) The Security Council adopted a press statement February 22 condemning recent terrorist attacks in Iraq, including the chlorine gas bombing of February 21 (text in para 5). This step concludes a series of recent Council press statements condemning terrorist attacks in Lebanon (February 13), Iran (February 15), and India and Pakistan (February 20).

¶2. (SBU) Ambassador Sanders presented the U.S. proposal, noting it had the support of the Iraqi mission. While all delegations supported the U.S. initiative, the discussion of the text flushed out member views on the situation in Iraq. Russia and France, supported by China, South Africa and Indonesia, objected to an explicit reference to the Baghdad Security Plan, arguing that they could not endorse a policy which had not been presented to the Council. The Qatari PermRep commented that the picture so far of the BSP is "gloomy." In subsequent negotiations among experts, the Qatari representative also tried to delete the reference to "terrorist attacks" in favor of a general condemnation of the violence in Iraq, arguing that sectarian and ethnic violence did not constitute terrorism. The Indonesian delegation unsuccessfully sought to delete or sideline the reference to the MNF-I.

¶3. (SBU) The Russian PermRep also took the opportunity to argue that it was time to introduce a timeline for the withdrawal of international forces, stating that the violence is based on opposition to a foreign presence. He added that there is a need for greater emphasis on a "broad" internal political dialogue and national reconciliation. The Italian PR, citing instructions from Rome, also argued for language emphasizing the need for dialogue. USUN, with support from the UK mission, urged the focus of the statement remain on the security threat to Iraq.

¶4. (SBU) The PermReps of Qatar and Panama observed that a mere press statement was an insufficient Council response to the grave security situation in Iraq. There was some debate whether to tie the statement to a specific attack. Most delegations concluded, however, that limiting the press statement to one attack would not accurately represent the pattern of violence in Iraq.

¶5. (SBU) Text of press statement follows: The members of the Security Council are following with concern the situation in Iraq and condemn all terrorist attacks, including the recent chlorine gas and other bombings in and around Baghdad, which have resulted in the death and injury of many innocent Iraqi civilians, and others.

The members of the Security Council acknowledge the efforts of the Iraqi Security Forces and the Multinational Forces-Iraq, whose members are also being targeted in ongoing attacks. The members of the Security Council extend their condolences to all of the victims and their families.

The members of the Security Council urge an end to the violence in the country and the redoubling of efforts to allow fulfillment of the goals of relevant UN Security Council Resolutions, in particular Resolution 1546 (2004) and most recently Resolution 1723 (2006), to help meet security and stability needs, and express their hope that the efforts of the government of Iraq will contribute to bringing security and stability to the country. The members of the Council reiterate the Council's call upon Member States to prevent the transit of terrorists to and from Iraq, arms for terrorists, and financing that would support terrorists.

The members of the Security Council reaffirm the need to combat terrorism in all forms and manifestations and by all means, in accordance with international law. End Text.

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